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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT

FRIDAY, MARCH 11, 2005

THIS REPORT PRESENTS THE TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER THREE THEMES:

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HEADLINES

MASS APPEAL

European Parliament Criticizes Turkish Police - Sabah
Kurdish-Shiite Alliance for Kirkuk - Hurriyet
Suicide Attack in Mosul: 50 Dead - Milliyet
Lebanese Comedy: Karami Assumes PM Post Again - Milliyet
US to Make Peace With Hizbulullah - DB-Tercuman
Armenian Lobby in US Kicks Off Campaign Before April 24 -
Aksam
Pentagon Clears Itself of Torture Charges - Sabah
Georgia to Close Russian Bases - Aksam

OPINION MAKERS

Chechen Attacks Expected After Maskhadov Killing - Zaman
Basayev Vows to Continue 'Jihad' - Yeni Safak
'Cedar Revolution' Slows, US Signals Recognition of
Hizbulullah - Zaman
US Winks at Hizbulullah - Radikal
US to Hand Over Abu-Ghraib to Iraqis - Zaman
Armenians Launch 'Genocide' Campaign in US - Cumhuriyet
Bush Puts Vienna Protocol into Trash Can - Radikal
Pentagon Strings Up CBS Anchorman Dan Rather - Yeni Safak
Vietnam Celebrates 30th Anniversary of US Withdrawal -
Cumhuriyet
FBI 'Crushes' Gambino Family - Radikal

BRIEFING

European Parliament Slams Turkey for Police Violence: The European Parliament slammed Turkey on Thursday for police violence against women demonstrators at a rally last weekend in Istanbul, warning that such brutality had harmed Turkey's image ahead of talks on Turkish accession to the European bloc. EU parliamentarians voted overwhelmingly in favor of a resolution on women's rights, strongly condemning the violence, and called on the EU Commission to provide a detailed report on the incident. Earlier this week, television footage showed policemen using pepper gas and batons against protesters in Istanbul on Sunday. The police kicked some demonstrators, including women, in the head as they lay on the ground. The crackdown shocked EU officials, who were in Turkey to prepare the way for Turkey's membership talks with the EU. PM Tayyip Erdogan accused the Turkish media on Thursday of 'exaggerating' the incident. 'It's as if the Turkish media are serving the Europeans from here,' Erdogan told the press in Ankara Thursday before flying to Madrid for an international security conference. He said the protesters had 'deliberately provoked' the police, knowing an EU delegation was arriving in Turkey the same day. "Radikal" reports that Turkey's missions in several EU countries have sent messages to Ankara warning of problems with the EU if the policemen who beat the women demonstrators are not punished.

PM Erdogan to Meet Annan in Madrid: PM Erdogan, in Madrid to attend an international conference on terrorism, will ask UN Secretary General Kofi Annan to declare that negotiations for a settlement in Cyprus will be restarted only if a positive result is guaranteed beforehand, "Zaman" reports. By doing so, Turkey will have shifted the Cyprus problem to the UN and will be able to avoid criticism by the European Union before the opening of entry talks with the bloc in early October.

Force Commander Warns Against PKK Infiltrations: Turkey's Land Forces Commander, General Yasar Buyukanit, said that the number of PKK militants inside the country has reached the level that existing when PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan was captured in 1999, the all-news channel NTV reported on Friday. Gen. Buyukanit spoke to the press at a reception for the opening of this year's International Defense and Aviation Fair in Ankara. Buyukanit claimed that most of the

militants in northern Iraq have infiltrated into Turkey, and noted an acceleration in infiltrations over the past 4-5 months.

Georgian FM Points to 'Fragile' Relations With Russia:
Visiting Georgian FM Salome Zurabishvili told the press after talks with FM Abdullah Gul that his country's relations with Russia were at a 'very fragile' stage, but he expressed hope that the two countries would succeed in resolving their disputes. 'We have the support of Turkey on the closing down of Russian military bases in Georgia, and we hope that we will make some progress on that question,' she said. Zurabishvili said talks with the Russian FM Sergei Lavrov to resolve bilateral disputes would begin soon, and would include Georgia's demands for the closure of two Russian bases on its territory.

Armenian Lobby Pushes for 'Genocide' Resolution: "Aksam"
and "Cumhuriyet" report that the Armenian lobby group ANKA has sent a letter to President Bush urging the Administration to recognize the Armenian 'genocide.' A "Cumhuriyet" reporter in Washington quotes a high-level US official as saying that the Bush Administration will work to prevent such a resolution from being passed. The official cautions, however, that 'our job this year is very tough.' The official notes that statements by some AKP politicians concerning US operations in Iraq have strengthened the hand of the Armenian lobby and made it more difficult for the Administration to defend Turkey in Congress.

MFA, NSC to Organize Armenian 'Genocide' Symposium: The Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the National Security Council (NSC) are organizing a meeting of Turkish and foreign historians and other experts in Ankara on May 28 for an impartial discussion of Armenian genocide claims, "Milliyet" reports. Three Armenian researchers have been invited to the meeting. Professor Halil Berkay, who has blamed the Turks for the forced emigration of Armenians by Ottomans in 1915, will not be invited.

Another Lawmaker Quits AKP: Another lawmaker quit the ruling AK Party on Thursday, the sixth in the last three weeks, bringing the number of seats held by the AKP down to 361 in the 550-seat parliament. Mehmet Sait Armagan, who resigned from AKP yesterday, is known to be close to former Culture and Tourism Minister Erkan Mumcu, who is expected to assume the leadership of the Motherland Party (ANAP) in coming days.

EDITORIAL OPINION:

US-Turkish Relations The Turkish Media and the Prime Minister

"How Can Turkey Improve Relations With the US?"
Mensur Akgun observed from Washington in the economic-political "Referans" (3/11): "The main problem in Turkish-American relations is that the US doesn't consider Turkey's interests and expectations before it takes action. Turkey is right in its expectations and demands. On the one hand the government is trying to please the Turkish public, and on the other hand it is trying to defend its interests and continue its relations with the US. Unfortunately, in trying to satisfy the public, the Turkish government has damaged the bilateral relationship with the US. But in the end Turkey needs the US. It is a must that Turkey have the US on its side at the UN, in NATO, in the IMF and the World Bank, and in many other fora. But at the same time we don't want the US to create instability in our region. Therefore we have to try different methods in dealing with the United States. We have to learn to look at problems from beyond our narrow window. We can't be afraid of going out to learn about the way others looking at these problems. We will get nowhere by cutting ourselves off. Turkey must have relevant policies for global problems. We can defend our interests only if we have something to say on global issues and can participate sensibly in the transatlantic debate. This fact becomes clearer when you see these issues from Washington's point of view."

"Analyzing the US"
Mehmet Ali Kislali commented in the liberal-intellectual "Radikal" (3/11): "Some of my American friends who know Turkey well objected strongly to my comment that 'the US has started a campaign against Turkey'. They object because they are unaware of developments in Turkey. Former Foreign Ministry undersecretary and NATO Ambassador Onur Oymen evaluated the situation in this way: 'if you read the Pollock article, the Feith remarks, and Rubin's article, you can start to see that the US has started a campaign against Turkey through the public. Don't we all know who is passing the information to these journalists and authors? An American journalist stays in Turkey for two days and writes details about Turkey in his column that none of us are aware of. That means that a US official has given him all this information. The US is stressing that the military in

Turkey should not interfere in politics while at the same time criticizing the Turkish military for not supporting the March 1 resolution. Another issue Turkey finds odd is that the US characterizes Turkey as a 'moderate Islamic country' when Turkey has been a secular country for the last 80 years. Also, the US claims that the Patriarch is ecumenical and invites people to a dinner party given in his honor. The US is following developments closely in Ankara and other parts of Turkey through its huge staff. But even with this large number of experts, it is not possible for them to see their mistakes.' Onur Oymen stresses that Turkey holds many valuable cards and, because of its strategic location, is a very powerful country and a regional power. Oymen notes that the important thing is not only to hold valuable cards in your hand but to know when and where to use them. Turkish diplomats say that in democracies nothing is given without receiving something in return. These same diplomats remind us that the US, during the last few years, has made continuous demands from turkey without giving anything in return."

"What is the Crime of the Turkish Media?" Fatih Altayli writes in the mainstream daily "Hurriyet" (3/11): "The Prime Minister has now accused the media of 'espionage,' charging that the media has brought to Turkish television screens the scenes of police beating up demonstrators in Istanbul last week while ignoring similar incidents in Europe. But the Prime Minister is obviously misinformed. The other day on 'Kanal D,' for example, we reported that 'what was done is wrong, but the Europeans have made similar mistakes.' We also gave specific examples from events in Italy, Ireland, France, and Sweden. We showed scenes in which Italian police shot and killed a demonstrator and then a police car ran over his body. I wrote about the same thing in my column the other day. To correct a mistake, the nature of the mistake must first be shown to the public. Since the Prime Minister has accepted that the police behavior was wrong, he shouldn't be bothered when it is reported on television. Tayyip Erdogan has received a great deal of praise for his efforts to make Turkey an open and democratic society. I wonder if the Prime Minister now regrets those efforts? He has leveled a number of charges against the press in recent days. I know from experience that when politicians start blaming the press, it means they have started to lose their confidence. If this is what is happening to Prime Minister Erdogan, it has started to happen rather early."

EDELMAN